

COLD WAR WITHOUT AN OSCAR

Since the director of Cold War already got an Oscar for Ida back in 2015 many hoped the 2019 Oscars would also be successful for Polish cinematography. Such expectations were further fueled by the fact that Cold War is a very artistic movie, one appreciated by critics and already given awards at big festivals. It was Cold War that made Joanna Kulig a worldwide star. However, shortly before the ceremony producers of the film still maintained it wasn't a favourite. The Academy decided the best foreign language film was Roma, which got an Oscar also for the best director and the **best shots**. Interestingly enough, Roma is available on Netflix. The 2019 top films include also Green Book with statuettes for the best picture, best supporting actor (Mahershala Ali) and best original screenplay as well as Bohemian Rhapsody (best actor, best sound editing, best sound mixing and best film editing). This year the Oscars were awarded for the 91st time.

PIŚ GOVERNMENT WITH 5 NEW PROGRAMS

Before the elections to the European Parliament the government of Law and Justice (PiS) presented a set of five new social programs. Two most important ones include 500+ for the first child (currently paid only to parents whose **income** is lower than an agreed minimum) and thirteenth pension amounting to a minimum one, that is to say PLN 1,100. The second one will not be a permanent program but one depending on the condition of the Polish budget. This means pensioners will receive it in 2019 but in the years to come government will see if they can afford it or not. Proposition number three is connected with restoring bus connections between small towns and villages - their number drastically fell in the recent years making it very difficult for people without a car or driving license to **commute**. The fourth program is no **income tax** for people under 26 years of age (0% for PIT-37 tax statement) and the last one is lower labour costs. Experts estimate the cost of the whole plan will be between PLN 30 and 40 billion (1% of GDP).

FOLDABLE SMARTPHONES HIT THE MARKET

First prototypes of foldable smartphones appeared last year. Now first two producers, Samsung and Huawei, presented devices that customers will be able to buy in the next months. In case of Samsung we are talking about Galaxy Fold model whose sales start on April 26. The device opens like a book, features a 4.6-inch phone display and transforms into a 7.3-inch tablet. It **boasts** 12GB of RAM and costs \$1,980. Its competition from Huawei is called Mate X. The Chinese smartphone uses different technology called "wraparound" display thanks to which there is a display at the front (6.6-inch) as well as at the back (6.38-inch). When unfolded, the screen has 8 inches. Huawei equipped its model with less RAM, 8GB, but wants to sell it for a higher price - \$2,600. Other producers quickly do their homework so Xiaomi and Oppo have already shown similar devices. Apple is still waiting but it is unlikely they will not join the race for what definitely became the technological trend of 2019.

WAR OF WORDS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND POLAND SMOULDERS

And every one of them (whether added or left out) appears to matter. On February 17 Mr. Israel Katz, the newly **appointed** acting Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated that "Poles have weaned anti-Semitism along with their mothers' milk". This was seen by many Poles (and certainly by the Polish government) as adding fuel to the fire after Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had recently hinted that Poles collaborated with Nazis in killing Jews during the 2nd World War. This is an extremely **sensitive** subject in Poland (the first country occupied by Nazi Germany and one that never had a collaborationist government), which was a major centre of Jewish life before the war and at the same time the place where the biggest concentration camps in Europe were located. The spokesperson for Netanyahu clarified recently that he spoke of Poles and not of the Polish Nation or its government. On February 25th Mr. Katz said on Israeli public radio that Polish government is working with the Israeli one on the issue. However, he never issued any apology for his words, something hugely **anticipated** by many here.



FOR&AGAINST

1 What film gets an Oscar should be decided by the public, not a narrow group of experts.

2 Introducing 500+ benefit for the first child is a good idea.
/discuss any of the proposed 5 programs/

3 Foldable smartphones will be a short-lived trend.

4 Antisemitism is preached in many homes in Poland.

VOCABULARY:

best shots - najlepsze zdjęcia
income - przychód
to commute - dojeżdżać do pracy/szkoły
income tax - podatek dochodowy
to boast - chwalić się
to smoulder - tlić się
to appoint - mianować
sensitive - delikatny
anticipated - oczekiwany

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What movie was chosen the best of 2019 by the Oscar Academy?
2. Did a Polish production, Cold War, get an Oscar?
3. What is about to change in the 500+ program?
4. Will pensioner always get an additional PLN 1,100 from 2019 on?
5. What became the smartphone trend of 2019?
6. Which two statements by Israeli politicians recently made people in Poland angry?

SOURCES BOX

polskieradio24.pl, an article from February 24, 2019 about new propositions of PiS government

businessinsider.com.pl, an article from February 25, 2019 new foldable smartphones

polskieradio24.pl, an article from February 25, 2019 about recent statements of Israeli politicians about Poles.